

Mansfield Youth Service Bureau
Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 17, 2006
12:00N @ Right Turn
90 S. Park Street, Willimantic, CT 06226

In attendance were: Ethel Mantzaris, Resident/ Chairperson; Michael Collins, Resident; Kevin Grunwald, Director Town of Mansfield Social Services; Janit Romayko, YSB Coordinator; Pat Michalak, YSB Counselor; Eileen Griffin, Therapist/Member; Jake Hovanic, 7th Grade/Resident; Shawnee Mason; 8th Grade MMS/Resident; Chris Murphy, Resident; Brittany Cushman 7th Grade MMS/Resident; Vicki Barbero, Program Director, "Right Turn" of Perception Programs, Inc.

Regrets: Frank Perrotti, Resident/Assistant Chairperson; Candace Morell, Assistant Principal MMS; Rachel LeClerc, Pupil Personnel Director; Jerry Marchon, Mansfield Police Dept; Valerie Thompson, 10th Grade EOSmith/Resident; Tom Miller, UConn/Eesident

Agenda items included:

Apologies: Chris and Janit were unable to negotiate the ice in his driveway and consequently the meeting was called to order at 12:10 pm. JR also will amend the minutes of the December 2005 meeting "to include Michael Collins" as he was present. There were several people at the meeting and the attendance was somewhat larger than the seating capacity.

Update: JR reviewed the December update. A copy is attached. There was a brief discussion about Safe Homes. Safe Home's intent is to inform parents about other parents who have signed on for the program and who have similar concerns. Kevin Grunwald said that he had seen/heard of a similar program that exists. There was some concern about that because youth could log on and identify where parties will be. Such is not the intent of the YSB program. (see attached email of 1/11/06)

Value Options: Some concerns about this program were expressed as there are "strings attached" to taking reimbursements. Preferred practices are often enabling and once signed the provider cannot refuse clients even though resources/staff are not available.

NECASA: The requirement of 16 – 20 participants for \$2000 presents some constraints. Transportation alone could eliminate the budget. The time frame of June 30, 2006 also presents problems as Mrs. Koropatkin at Mansfield Middle is only available in the summers. Ashford, Coventry and Willington had hoped to combine their grants with Mansfield but also found the constraints to be similar. The YSB's will meet again to discuss this.

“Right Turn” of Perception Program, Inc.: Vicki Barbero “Right Turn” is an outpatient substance abuse program for at risk adolescents ages 12-18. Parents are also urged to be involved through a number of programs including education, family therapy, and relapse prevention groups. The number one choice of substances for adolescents is tobacco, followed by alcohol, then marijuana, then prescription drugs. Kids will snort Adderol, Strattera, Concerta, Ritalin, Oxycodone, Oxycotin and try to get high. Right Turn receives referrals from court, parents, schools, DCF and Adult Probation. The number of referrals from Juvenile Court has decreased while the numbers from Adult Probation 16 – 18 has exploded.

Usually the continuum offers prevention (which is what YSB tries to do), intervention, treatment, harm reduction, follow-up, or rehab. The process involves outpatient first, and if that is not successful, then youth can attend Right Turn 3 hours a day, for 3 days a week. Programs are usually 4-7pm. Right Turn services the Windham and Danielson regions and has resources for youth to attend Ala-teen, AA, Ala-non and Narcotics Anonymous. The 21 town region is a large one and the Windham Region has far more services in place than out in the Danielson region. Issues among youth are violence, obesity, diabetes and poverty. DCF covers the entire 21 towns but they are often responding to a crisis. Right Turn also services the Pomfret School, a private coeducational boarding school in Pomfret. Vicki said that the “culture” of alcohol is different among youth there as often times they are exposed to it socially. Eight percent of the time, private school youth are honest about their consumption but the academic pressures are also more intense too.

Having parents who use/abuse seems to be the biggest problem among any youth. Parental radar is not usually well tuned to their kids’ problems, especially if the parent is using alcohol. Vicki searches for the “answers” on this problem every day and damage seems to be extensive to the family in terms of family secrets, non-communication, lost work time and maladaptive behavior.

Adolescents who happen to get caught are often sent to Juvenile Court. With alcohol, their behavior is seen as self-medication and they often have mental health problems. Chris remarked that he has heard of “pharm” parties and was reading about them online. Pharm parties occur when kids bring all their medications, pool them together with others, grind them up and snort them. It is common among high schoolers and rampant at UConn. It is a dangerous way to have fun.

Having alcohol at home is also rather dangerous and most parents do not realize the liability of serving alcohol/not supervising minors.

Meeting adjourned 1:15PM.
Respectfully submitted,

Janit P. Romyko
Secretary

JR/klt

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 7, 2006
12:30pm TBA